

# My Life in Cuba.

By Rita L. V. De Ruiz.

Mme. Ruiz is the wife of Ruiz, the American citizen who was murdered by the Spaniards in Cuba.

She tells a story that ends like one of Stanley Weyman's romances, yet it is true, and it is perhaps well that American women should know it and know that it is true.

Here is her story:

I WAS born in Alanagua, a little town under the jurisdiction of Havana, in the year 1862. My parents gave me as much education as their means permitted, and I was fortunate enough to go to the college of Guanabacoa. When I was but ten years old my father died. In the travels which my family took after this event I first got a glimpse of the man who afterward became my husband. This occurred in Guanabacoa in 1874. My attention was attracted to him from the first moment, and I had the happiness to see that he also was attracted to me, and ever afterward his image never left my memory.

After a short time my future husband went to the United States to study dental surgery. He entered college in Philadelphia, and received the degree of doctor in 1881, and then returned to Cuba. In the year 1874 or '75 he declared his intention to become an American citizen.

He received his naturalization papers in 1880, and filed them in the American Consulate on August 9, 1895, receiving the number 2,000 for his certificate.

From my marriage, on November 3, 1882, commenced the happiest period of my life. My husband did well from the time he arrived in Cuba, and he soon had numerous patients by his skillful treatment. We lived in absolute contentment, and we always had not only all the necessities of life, but even the luxuries.

All went well until December 21 last. My husband was called at 9 o'clock at night and taken before the Justice of the Peace of the district where we lived. He was asked to tell the names of the persons who threw stones the night before at the City Hall. When he said he did not know, the Judge said that he had mistaken my husband for a neighbor who lived across the street.

After this I was filled with fear, and begged my husband to go away from a place filled with so many horrors. But he soothed me, saying that he was safe, since he was an American citizen and took no part in any of the political troubles that were disturbing the country. He did not wish to leave Cuba on account of the climate, since our little girl, Gloria, three years of age, had chronic bronchitis. I also have weak lungs, and for many years have suffered from throat affection.

On February 4 a police officer came at 9 o'clock in the morning to my husband's office, No. 2 Jesus y Maria street, in Guanabacoa, and took him to the jail. The name of the Judge who issued the warrant for his arrest is Don N. La Rosa. From the moment of his imprisonment he was placed in "incommunicado," that is, cut off from the outside world.

He was put into a dark hole, the door of which was hermetically sealed, and no light nor air could penetrate except through a small round hole no larger than the hole for a stovepipe, cut in the wall.

I begged to be allowed to give him a cot, or even a hammock, but this request was scornfully refused.

Finally, one of the wardens of the jail, who was a patient of my husband, interceded for me to the military authorities, and I was allowed to send an extension chair, on which my husband could rest a little.

On the seat of this chair he scratched with his finger nails his last message to me and to his children. From his words I know his mind was clear, since he named all his children correctly and in the order of their birth.

The fear which such cruel treatment had inspired in him is shown in his last words scratched on the chair. They are:

"Adios, I will be killed. Yes, they will kill me if they take me to Havana! Adios, Retita, wife of my soul, my children; adios, my sons; adios, my daughters! Be good and obedient to your mother."

Then he named the children, each one in the proper order: "Nina, Evangelina, Ricardito, Rene and Gloria, adios to all."

The chair was sent to me by the military authorities, not knowing the message that my dying husband had sent to me. I found it days afterward, a proof to me and a memento to my children of the horrible cruelty that sent their father into eternity.

The entire period in which Dr. Ruiz was in prison was thirteen, counting the 17th, on which date the Spaniards say that he died at 1 o'clock in the afternoon.

Neither to me nor to the Consul who represented him did the Spanish send word of Dr. Ruiz's death. I learned of my terrible loss accidentally. The undertaker lived across the street, and he told a friend of mine that he was preparing the funeral of Dr. Ruiz.

Consul-General Lee learned of this outrage only because I sent him word through a friend. The warden, Roman Satode, who was so kind as to allow me to take the chair, told me that my poor husband was kept in the dark cell for over thirteen hours after his death.

Through the efforts of Consul-General Lee I was enabled to see his body,



Mrs. De Ruiz, Widow of the American Prisoner Who Was Murdered in a Spanish Dungeon in Cuba.

and I saw his poor wounded head, where the Spanish cowards had beat him to death, and I cut a few locks of his hair to keep for my children.

I have a sad history in the past, and a sadder future. But I will struggle bravely to keep the sacred charge my husband left me in my children. I will live and work for them.

*Rita L. V. De Ruiz*

## WEDDING ENTERTAINMENTS.

HOW to relieve Spring weddings of the dead level of monotony, which, next to the groom, is the most distressing feature of the average wedding, is the question which is agitating the minds of the bride-elect with which the country is filled just before Easter.

Here are a few suggestions which the "to-be-brides" are discussing as a means of enlivening the customary solemnity of the auspicious occasion:

One maiden, whose wedding is to take place at high noon, is planning to follow the ceremony and luncheon with a theatre party. It is an expensive as well as novel scheme of entertainment, and necessitates limiting the choice of a wedding day to Saturday and Wednesday.

Another bride, who is exceedingly modern and vivacious in her ideas, will follow her collation with a series of "living pictures," in which her bridesmaids will appear in the costumes of the most famous brides in history.

The old-style wedding breakfast, which is attended by the bride and groom and intimate family friends, where the bride cuts the wedding cake and the groom blushing responds to the toasts, is once more in vogue.

A combination which a bride-elect who studies the pleasure of young and old alike is planning is an afternoon dance for the young people and a progressive whist party for the old folk, to immediately follow the serving of sweets and dainties.

A JUDICIOUS use of paint will transform many a seemingly hopeless article. A remarkably ugly lamp was made into a thing of beauty by three coats of orange enamel paint applied to the porcelain vase. The metal stand was treated to a coat of the black paint which comes for bent iron work, and the whole was completed by a shade of orange crepe paper. For such work one should get the English enamel paints, which come in a great variety of colors and give a surface as smooth as glass.